

(Washington, DC)- Congresswoman Gwen Moore today announced that the Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration will provide \$495,591 in Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program Allocation funds for the expansion of Milwaukee's Ways to Work (WTW) loan program. Since 1984, WTW has been helping low-income families in need of employment get to major employment centers within the Milwaukee metropolitan area by issuing small direct loans for the purchase, repair, and maintenance of automobiles. Ways to Work will use this funding to help those who are low-income or unemployed obtain access to jobs or retain jobs by alleviating transportation barriers.

"For many low-income families, getting to a job can be even harder than getting hired in the first place. Entry-level jobs of low-income workers are increasingly found in the plants, warehouses, strip malls, and office parks of suburbia," Congresswoman Moore said. "This funding will assist these workers in getting to their place of employment, whether it is at a plant in a neighboring town, or during the graveyard shift when public transportation does not run."

Since taking office in January, Congresswoman Moore has taken an active role in trying to help remove transportation barriers to work for low-income citizens. Earlier this year, Congresswoman Moore introduced the Creating Access to Rides (CAR) Act in the U.S. House of Representatives, which would help low-income workers finance the purchase of cars so that they can access more and better job opportunities. The legislation would establish a 5-year, \$50 million grant program through which states, localities, and nonprofits could apply for funding to strengthen existing low-income car ownership programs like WTW or create new ones. Studies show that people are more likely to find steady employment and earn a decent wage when they have access to a car.

In recent years, a number of states and other non-profit organizations like WTW in Milwaukee have also developed programs to assist the working poor with the purchase of a car by making available-for subsidized sale or lease-donated vehicles or vehicles purchased wholesale from dealerships that have been repaired to good working order. Frequently, these programs also work with local lending institutions to obtain car loans for low-income workers while providing financial education and promoting financial literacy. The programs do more than just provide access to a car-they also improve a low-income family's credit and connect them to a savings institution.

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